

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

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21-12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DRC-01 MC-02 ACDA-19 OMB-01 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 /129 W

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R 290636Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 328

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY MANILA

S E C R E T TAIPEI 7141

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS MILI TW

SUBJECT: M-14 RIFLES FOUND IN THE PHILIPPINES

REF A) STATE 045691

SUMMARY: PURSUANT REFTTEL, CHIEF MAG INFORMED GENERAL LAI OF US POSITION ON M-14 RIFLES FOUND IN PHILIPPINES. LAI REFUSED ADMIT THIRD COUNTRY TRANSFER, REGISTERED STRONG PROTEST, AND ASKED FOR TEAM OF US EXPERTS TO CONDUCT ON-SITE (60TH ARSENAL) INVESTIGATION. COUNTRY TEAM RECOMMENDS MAKING NO RESPONSE TO MND PROTEST AND LETTING MATTER REST.

END SUMMARY.

1. PER REFTTEL INSTRUCTIONS, AND AFTER STUDY OF POUCHED MATERIAL (DELAYED IN TRANSIT), CHIEF MAAG, ON AUGUST 15, INFORMED GEN. LAI MING-TONG, CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF, MND, OF US POSITION ON SUBJECT RIFLES AND REQUESTED THAT ROC ADVISE US WHAT STEPS IT IS TAKING TO ADHERE TO PROVISIONS OF THE MOU UNDER WHICH M-14 PRODUCTION FACILITY ESTABLISHED.

2. GEN. LAI REACTED VIGOROUSLY PROTESTING THAT RE-AFFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS US ACCUSATION WAS UNWARRANTED.

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IN SPITE OF CAREFUL AND REPEATED EXPLANATIONS THAT
USG WAS CONCERNED ABOUT VIOLATION OF MOU (I.E. THIRD

PARTY TRANSFERS) AND WAS NOT ACCUSING ROC OF SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO PHILIPPINE INSURGENTS, GEN. LAI STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO ADMIT ANY THIRD PARTY TRANSFERS AND PROMISED STRONG WRITTEN DENIAL OF ANY ROC INVOLVEMENT.

3. ON SEPT. 4 CINC ROC COMBINED SERVICE FORCES CALLED ON CHIEF MAAG TO DELIVER AN ORAL DENIAL AND TO PRESS VIGOROUS ARGUMENT ON REASONS WHY ROC WOULD NOT, COULD NOT, AND DID NOT TRANSFER ROC PRODUCED WEAPONS TO ANY THIRD PARTY IN VIOLATION OF MOU.

4. SUBSEQUENTLY, ON SEPT. 18 GEN. LAI AFFIRMED IN WRITING THAT MND HAS ALWAYS STRICTLY ADHERED TO CONDITIONS SET FORTH IN MOU RELATING TO PRODUCTION OF TYPE 57 (M-14) RIFLES AND THAT NO TYPE 57 (M-14) RIFLES PRODUCED BY ROC HAVE EVER BEEN SOLD OR SUPPLIED TO ANY THIRD PARTY. THE LETTER ALSO STATES THAT FROM THE FACTS LISTED IN AN ENCLOSURE TO THE LETTER, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE M-14 RIFLES USED BY THE PHILIPPINE INSURGENTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE MADE BY ROC 60TH ARSENAL IN PARTS, MATERIALS, AND IN WORKING METHODS. IN SUMMARY, LETTER STATES: "WE DO NOT ACCEPT THE CONCLUSION WHICH IS INCONSISTENT WITH FACTS AND WE HEREBY STRONGLY PROTEST AGAINST SUCH AN ALLEGATION. TO CLARIFY THE UNTRUTHFUL JUDGMENT IN THE INVESTIGATION REPORT OF THE US TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES, MND WELCOMES THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO SEND TECHNICAL INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL AND EXPERIENCED ORDNANCE EXPERTS TO TAIPEI TO CONDUCT A JOINT INVESTIGATION ON SITE TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION." (COPIES OF AUG. 15, 1973 CHIEF MAAG LETTER AND SEPT. 18, 1973 MND LETTER HAVE BEEN FORWARDED BY POUCH).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS: WE BELIEVE THIS MATTER HAS BEEN PUSHED TO ITS PRACTICAL LIMITS; WHILE IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THE ROC TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANY COMPLICITY, WE ARE QUITE CERTAIN THEY HAVE GOTTEN OUR MESSAGE. THUS WE RECOMMEND: A) IGNORING OR, IF IT IS RENEWED, DECLINING THE ROC PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT IN-

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VESTIGATION BY EXPERTS; AND B) ACCEPTING THE ENCLOSURE TO LAI'S LETTER (DESCRIBING CONTROLS OVER DISPOSITION OF WEAPON PARTS, AND SCRAP) AS THE BEST WE CAN DO IN THE WAY OF ASSURANCE THAT THE ROC WILL COMPLY WITH THE MOU.

MCCONAUGHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, TREATY VIOLATION, ARMS SMUGGLING, MILITARY AGREEMENTS, ARMS PRODUCTION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TAIPEI07141
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TAIPEI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973114/aaaaacpn.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) STATE 045691
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Nov-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <14-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: M-14 RIFLES FOUND IN THE PHILIPPINES
TAGS: MILI, TW, RP, US
To: STATE MANILA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005